(b) if so, whether Government would investigate this matter; and

(c) whether penalty would be imposed on such medical practitioners who are found guilty of such practices since they are playing with the lives of the people?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA): (a) to (c) The Medical Council of India has no such information. As per the Indian Medical Council (Professional conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002, a physician shall not give, solicit, or receive nor shall he offer to give, solicit or receive, any gift, gratuity, commission or bonus in consideration of or return for the referring, recommending or procuring of any patient for medical, surgical or other treatment. These provisions shall apply with equal force to the referring, recommending or procuring by a physician of any person, specimen or material for diagonostic, or other study or work. The Medical Council of India or the State Medical Councils are empowered to award such punishment as deemed necessary or even removal of the name of any registered practitioner from the Register altogether or for a specified period in respect of any act of violation of the Code of Ethics which may be brought before it, after conducting an enquiry.

TKDL project

2554. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELAFRE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has also represented in the Task Force for Traditional Knowledge Digital Library;

(b) whether Government have submitted Traditional Knowledge Resource Classification of Traditional Knowledge Digital Library to World Intellectual Property Organisation during 2001;

(c) whether European and United States Patent Office commented that the classification is not useful to non-experts, whereas the Chinese data base is useful;

(d) whether persons with Commerce and Life Science degrees are appointed as Information Technology experts in the project;

(e) whether there was any delay in implementing TKDL project; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Persons with Commerce and Life Science were appointed as I.T. Experts, as they had also requisite experience of working in the I.T. Sector.

(e) and (f) Substantial work on the TKDL has been completed.

Herbal Plants in NER

2555. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the North Eastern Region is very rich in herbal plants;

(b) if so, whether this wealth of the region has been exploited;

(c) whether Government have prepared any plans to make use of the herbal wealth of the region;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA): (a) It is correct that North-East Region is very rich in biodiversity which includes medicinal plants.

(b) to (e) The Department of Agriculture & Cooperation (DAC), is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in NE States including Sikkim. Under the scheme assistance is provided for development of horticulture crops including Medicinal & Aromatic plants in the region. Assistance is also provided for establishment of Progeny & Herbal Gardens. The National Medicinal Plants Board has sanctioned 29 projects in the North-East (Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura & Agartala) out of 145 projects for the over all development of medicinal plants sector in the region.